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The grape vine that I gave to WSP. Yes, yes, yes I have voluminous notes on it. Not here regretably. I'm sure I even have the direct and the indirect responses to the gift. As I recall I think the gift was greeted with "what do I need something like that for, it's just a parasitic vine". He did however plant it. It's funny to recall that at the moment when I bought the vine that WSP and HRP were having one of their knock down and drag out fights. Somehow the angst of the moment comes back when I recall the virtual trauma of the emotional tone of that moment. I think it was WSP's birthday gift, bought early. I will get the file when next I am there at The Homestead. It is an expensive Concord grape that is supposed to do well in a cool climate such as Lackawanna County.

I do not have a grape jelly attachment / obsession.

The Bubentak "gathering Winter fuel" episode sounds like a description of a Bruegel painting. Do you know the pictures in Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, a cycle of the seasons, they are in the Bruegel book that you gave me. I will give the book to you so you can study them. The book is at The Homestead. It is a marvelous book. Bruegel is marvelous.

I saw on public television the other night an hour long film on Scranton narrated by McNulty in which the history of the town and a long discussion of Steamtown are the most prominent parts. When they showed the film of the first train arriving at the Lackawanna Station I looked for you in the crowd on the train. I didn't see you. I'm sure you know about the film. It was so peculiar watching a film like that from my own couch, here in Chester, Pa. Speaking of films, did you see (is it available to see?) the video of the Carbonade Pioneer Day Parade 1984. I would like to see myself in it when that can be arranged.

Salmon returning to their home stream. I get very involved in that when I teach Prehistoric Art. Salmon leaping up rivers is a motif that occurs on carved reindeer antlers from 'skreen-teen million' years ago. There used to be salmon in the Wyoming River at Pittston, and eels used to return up the creek at Dundaff. I remember Mrs. Cramer and Mr. Cramer talking about that the day we visited them at their cottage at Crystal Lake. If there were salmon in the Wyoming then there were salmon in the Lackawanna River, mustn't there have been? I don't know how I know about the salmon in the Wyoming River - I just realized there is no such creature at the Wyoming River. It must be the Susquehanna River. I am sure it is one of the early histories, which one I couldn't even begin to say, that mentions it. Perhaps there were salmon in Tinker Creek at one time?

7:10 PM, on the verge of darkness, the sky cleared to a haline clarity and the heat will therefore escape and it will get cold tonight. I have been alone and silent all day, save for baby talk to the dog and a brief telephone call received from Inter-Library Loan about a book that is in over there for me. The lingering sickness has driven away any appetite.

DWP.

Sunday morning, 11:30 AM  
322 E. 19th Street  
September 23, 1984

Robert -

Always in the Autumn I go into a 'state' composed of melancholy / energy / tremendous individual assertion, but what is going on with me right now is quite a mystery. I have no energy. I feel as if I have hundred pound weights attached to each of my limbs and am being asked to run. I get up in the morning and struggle to a chair to sit down. I have been this way for three or four days in a row. Perhaps if I put on Das Lied von der Erde (Der Erlösung im Herbst, The mists of autumn build their blue wall over the sea; With heartfrost covered, stands the grass; It seems as if an artist had strewn the dust of jade over delicate blossoms.) and attempt to do some touch typing I will rouse myself from this trance. It is as if the less I do the less I can do. I have to turn this tide of lethargy around. Or do I need the time to rest, and to think, and to endlessly indulge in a selfish holiday with myself.

Two mislives from you yesterday, Saturday: the plates for Mrs. Holstein, and a letter (09-19-1984), containing the "Savings Account Temporary Passbook Entry". Is there anything in the Holstein plates box which would prevent me from re-addressing it and sending it on to Mrs. Holstein just as it is? I will wait to hear from you about this before I open it. Thank you for the Harold T. Loomis deposit. I will be surprised if there are any more donations to be deposited.

I am amused by your establishment of a Mayflower Day acorn squash tradition. I can't help but wonder how much of it YJB swallowed?

I am also amused at the method adopted by Dwight Anderson in his conversation. He has a way of saying what everyone knows and what everyone has known and what is practically so well known that it might be dismissed in marble along the main street as if he had just casually heard it: "I hear we're not going to be having a wedding in October." Somehow I at this moment would find it more natural if he came right out and asked what exactly was the nature of the problem and whose side one were taking in the fight. Lamp posts in Memorial Park, who is paying for that?

"There are some who did not attend this year because they felt that they wanted to attend church in their own church." Who could this be. Are people really that rigid.

I will send a bill to Dorothy Essif and tell her to get in touch with you when she has paid, as you suggest.

Your unconscious pun on the name of Mildred Wright Labarre is very droll: "Mildred Labarre's heart surely is in the Wright place, even though she is fuzzy on some identifications." (p. 3)

Second only to your tableau vivant on the 'west wind', would be the tableau vivant of you "rotting out the scales of justice".

at 1PM, I packed up my Apple Chutney preparations and went to the Homestead and made 6 pints of what appears to be a wonderful creation. HRP got interested in the recipe and the process and I shall probably give her a bottle this winter. By 3:10PM I had finished and the bottles had been sealed (boiled 5 minutes under water) and placed on a cutting board on top of the refrigerator to cool. I wish that I had the jar here because I would like to hear the tops "pop" when the jars cool. This is my fifth canning/pickling session this fall:

1. Currant jelly - 7 pints - 7/30-31/84
2. dill pickles - 22 quarts - 9-18-84
3. grape jelly - 2 pints - 9-21-84
4. blueberry jam - 5 pints - 9-30-84
5. apple chutney - 6 pints - 10-04-84

September 26, 1984  
Wednesday afternoon, 5:56 PM

Robert -

As it turns out, the lethargy I was complaining about on Sunday morning was the first symptom of a brief illness. Larry had it too. He characterized the situation as having a 'dead head' (a head with no mental life), extreme tiredness (to the point of getting out of bed and feeling like getting right back in bed). It was the same for me. I recovered yesterday and this morning when I woke I had it worse than before. Now I am feeling a little better than I did when I laid down for an afternoon nap about 3:30 PM. Your letter of '1984 Autumnal Equinox' arrived at noon and I read it before my nap. I would describe as ecstatic your state of mind in the letter: grape jelly, cutting down trees around Elkdale Hall, trip to Owego, sitting in the morning sun drinking coffee ("Childhood memories and present realities are synthesizing rather more beautifully ce matin.").

It is supposed to drop to 40° tonight and that will be the coldest so far this season. Trees do change colour and drop their leaves with no frost.

First a few enclosures:

1. page 3 of your letter of 09-19-1984 with the pun on 'right' (wright).
2. copy of my letter to Dorothy Essif
3. copy of letter to me from Margaret R. R.
4. copy of a letter that crossed my desk from PENNSYLVANIA HERITAGE.

Got anything you'd like to advertise? It looks like they are looking for submissions.

I still don't know what to do about the Whites Valley M. E. Church dinner on October 6, 1984.

And the Anderson saga is not over yet. I did some of it wrong. See enclosed xerox of her letter to me. She did pay the bill, however. Of course I feel that I carried out her instructions to the letter of her word. What she says I didn't do she never told me about.

I will re-read your letter of '1984 Autumnal Equinox' and then move on to the next layer of 'accumulation' on this desk.

One can hardly hear the word equinox without thinking about "equinoctial storms". During my residence in Carbonade (1977-1980) HRP was heard by me to mention equinoctial storms. When questioned by me about it she said that Aunt Nettie and Aunt Jennie and all of the Russells used to talk about equinoctial storms. I have quite a file of notes on it. My dictionary says: "A violent storm of wind and rain occurring, supposedly, at or near the time of the equinox." Ask HRP and see what she says. But of course I too think of Stonehenge and Vivaldi and only the other day I was thinking about how much I would like to hear the Poulenc Model Animals.

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